2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament

Report submitted by Ireland

Introduction

1. States parties agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) that there should be regular reports, within the framework of the NPT strengthened review process, by all States parties on the implementation of article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

2. Ireland hereby submits its report to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

3. Since the submission of its last report to the first session of the Preparatory Committee in 2007, Ireland has participated actively in work on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, including as a member of the New Agenda Coalition, the European Union and the Vienna Group of 10, as well as in cooperation with other like-minded States.

4. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland, Micheál Martin, addressed the Conference on Disarmament on 2 March 2010. He noted that his address took place close to the fortieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty and recalled that, through the actions of the Irish delegation at the General Assembly under one of his predecessors, Frank Aiken, Ireland had been instrumental in bringing the Treaty about. He also noted that despite the 40-year existence of the Treaty and the subsequent agreements reached by States parties on its implementation, significant unfinished business remained, that the threat from nuclear weapons remained very real and that promises remained unfulfilled. He described the decade since the 2000 Review Conference as one of stagnation. He outlined some of the factors which would be important to ensure a successful Review Conference in 2010.

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5. In his address to the current Review Conference on 3 May 2010, Mr. Martin described support for NPT as a cornerstone of Irish foreign policy and said that Ireland was a firm advocate of efforts to strengthen the Treaty and to ensure respect for its provisions. He noted that the 13 practical steps agreed in 2000 remained largely unimplemented and that selective approaches which stressed the urgency of non-proliferation while downplaying the need for progress in relation to disarmament served merely to weaken the Treaty. He stressed that all States had a part to play in order to ensure a successful outcome to the Review Conference.

6. At the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, Ireland, together with its partners in the New Agenda Coalition, sponsored resolution 64/57, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments". In that resolution, the Assembly noted with satisfaction the renewed interest in nuclear disarmament on the part of international leaders expressed, inter alia, during the Security Council summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament held on 24 September 2009, reaffirmed that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation were mutually reinforcing processes requiring urgent irreversible progress on both fronts and recalled the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament, in accordance with commitments made under article VI of NPT. The resolution was supported by 169 States Members of the United Nations, demonstrating broad support for the nuclear disarmament pillar of the Treaty.

7. Also at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, Ireland supported a number of resolutions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, such as the resolutions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East (resolution 64/26), a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (resolution 64/29), a nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas (resolution 64/44), renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons (resolution 64/47), the follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons* (resolution 64/55), towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments (resolution 64/57), the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East (resolution 64/66) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (resolution 64/69).

8. Ireland is also committed to the effective implementation of the European Union strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the European Union in December 2003. Building further on this strategy, the Heads of State and Government of the European Union agreed in December 2008 on an action plan against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Furthermore, in December 2008 the Heads of State and Government of the European Union endorsed a declaration on international security, with a focus on issues related to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as the prevention of terrorism.

Implementation of the 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and paragraphs 3 and 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, included in the Final Document adopted by consensus at the 2000 Review Conference

Step 1

The importance and urgency of signatures and ratifications, without delay and without conditions and in accordance with constitutional processes, to achieve the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

9. Ireland ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in July 1999 and has advocated the urgent need for its entry into force without delay and without conditions. It has worked in support of this objective within the European Union and the New Agenda Coalition. Ireland continues to see the Treaty as one of the fundamental building blocks in a step-by-step approach on the road to nuclear disarmament.

Step 2

A moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosion pending entry into force of that Treaty

10. Ireland, together with its European Union partners, has urged all States to abide by a moratorium pending the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and to refrain from any actions which are contrary to the obligations and provisions of the Treaty.

Step 3

The necessity of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with the statement of the Special Coordinator in 1995 and the mandate contained therein, taking into consideration both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work, which includes the immediate commencement of negotiations on such a treaty with a view to their conclusion within five years

11. Ireland has been a member of the Conference on Disarmament since 1999 and has actively supported efforts to break the deadlock in that body, including by participating actively in the collective effort which led to the adoption of a programme of work during the 2009 session. While disappointed that it has not proved possible to meet the deadline set for the conclusion of a fissile material treaty, Ireland has been encouraged by the broad support for the beginning of

negotiations, as expressed, inter alia, in consensus resolutions of the General Assembly. Ireland continues to support efforts by successive Presidents of the Conference to enable substantive work to resume. It maintains the view that the Conference on Disarmament should begin negotiations without preconditions on a treaty dealing with fissile material. Ireland believes that for such a treaty to be meaningful, it must include a verification mechanism and cover existing stocks.

Step 4

The necessity of establishing in the Conference on Disarmament an appropriate subsidiary body with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament is urged to agree on a programme of work which includes the immediate establishment of such a body

12. In addition, Ireland continues to favour the early establishment of a subsidiary body to deal specifically with the issue of nuclear disarmament. It also sees merit in embarking on a process that will eventually lead to an agreement on the non-weaponization of outer space.

Step 5

The principle of irreversibility to apply to nuclear disarmament, nuclear and other related arms control and reduction measures

13. The principle of irreversibility is a fundamental one which must be applied to all disarmament and arms control measures (regardless of whether they are unilateral, bilateral or multilateral). Ireland considers that the application of this principle is the only guarantee against the possibility of redeployment.

Step 6

An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament to which all States parties are committed under article VI

14. Ireland, as a member of the New Agenda Coalition, continues to press for verifiable progress under this step. The fulfilment, by the nuclear-weapon States, of this unequivocal undertaking is a basic necessity for the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Step 7

The early entry into force and full implementation of START II and the conclusion of START III as soon as possible, while preserving and strengthening the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty as a cornerstone of strategic stability and as a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons, in accordance with its provisions

15. Developments since 2000 have not removed the need for a basis for further reductions of strategic offensive weapons. Ireland notes the conclusion of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for

the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms ("New START"), but questions its contribution to effective nuclear disarmament. As Ireland has emphasized, through the New Agenda Coalition, reductions in the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads, while welcome, are not a substitute for irreversible cuts in, and the total elimination of, nuclear weapons.

Step 8

The completion and implementation of the Trilateral Initiative between the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the International Atomic Energy Agency

16. Ireland continues to support this initiative and sees value in it as an example for future work in the area of nuclear disarmament.

Step 9

Steps by all the nuclear-weapon States leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that promotes international stability, and based on the principle of undiminished security for all:

- *Further efforts by the nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally*
- *Increased transparency by the nuclear-weapon States with regard to their nuclear weapons capabilities and the implementation of agreements pursuant to article VI and as a voluntary confidence-building measure to support further progress on nuclear disarmament*
- *The further reduction of non-strategic nuclear weapons, based on unilateral initiatives and as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process*
- *Concrete agreed measures to further reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems*
- *A diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies to minimize the risk that these weapons ever be used and to facilitate the process of their total elimination*
- *The engagement, as soon as appropriate, of all the nuclear-weapon States in the process leading to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons*

17. As a non-nuclear-weapon State, Ireland can only press for progress on the implementation of these steps. It has stressed, in particular, the importance of the principle of transparency contained in this step. In the interest of transparency and as a baseline for future disarmament measures, Ireland has called upon the nuclear-weapon States to publish their aggregate holdings of nuclear weapons on active and reserve status, and to do so in a consistent and uniform manner. Together with the principles of irreversibility and verification, this should apply to all disarmament and arms control efforts. The statements and working papers of the New Agenda Coalition at the meetings of the Preparatory Committee and the Review Conference

contain further information about the position of Ireland on the matters covered by step 9, including, inter alia, operational status and non-strategic nuclear weapons.

Step 10

Arrangements by all nuclear-weapon States to place, as soon as practicable, fissile material designated by each of them as no longer required for military purposes under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or other relevant international verification and arrangements for the disposition of such material for peaceful purposes, to ensure that such material remains permanently outside military programmes

18. Ireland calls on nuclear-weapon States that have not yet done so to make such arrangements.

Step 11

Reaffirmation that the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in the disarmament process is general and complete disarmament under effective international control

19. Ireland works actively in a number of disarmament forums and is a State party, inter alia, to NPT, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention. In addition, it hosted and presided over the negotiation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held in Dublin in May 2008, and was among the first States to ratify that Convention. Ireland is also active in work within the European Union on weapons of mass destruction as well as on conventional disarmament.

20. Ireland also participates in a number of multilateral export control forums, namely the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Zangger Committee. Ireland sees effective export control as complementary to multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts.

Step 12

Regular reports, within the framework of the NPT strengthened review process, by all States parties on the implementation of article VI and paragraph 4 (c) of the 1995 decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and recalling the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 8 July 1996

21. Ireland considers regular reporting to be a key element of the 13 steps and has presented reports during the last and the current NPT review cycle. It views reporting not as an end in itself but as an important tool in strengthening the NPT process, through greater transparency.

Step 13

The further development of the verification capabilities that will be required to provide assurance of compliance with nuclear disarmament agreements for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear-weapon-free world

22. The 2000 Review Conference specifically endorsed the measures of the Model Additional Protocol approved by IAEA. Ireland fully supports IAEA in its verification tasks and strongly favours a system of strengthened IAEA safeguards. It has urged all States, regardless of the size or nature of their nuclear programme, which have not yet signed and ratified an Additional Protocol to do so.